PWB Character Analysis Assignment

2018

Background:

Nathan has his own agenda for this mission to the Congo, and it really does not include his wife or his children. They have no voice in his mission, but Kingsolver gives them each a voice in the novel. This allows them to tell their own stories apart from Nathan's and from each other. While giving the women their voices, she denies Nathan a voice, and we understand him only through the various perspectives of the women in his life.

The characters' distinctly different voices and ways of interpreting and reacting to the various events in the novel affect how the reader interprets and understands those events. The literary element of voice is purposefully used to create specific effects in the novel, creating varied perspectives that allow for a variety of interpretations.

Day 1 / Ruth May: Introduction

Respond to each question on your notebook paper:

1) How would you describe Ruth May and her personality? Generate a list.
 a) Discuss in small groups around you, add to your list.

2) How do you know these descriptions are accurate? What did the **author do** to create this character and her personality?
 a) Discuss as a class, add to your list

Evidence / Using Ruth May's earliest passages, select various quotes that illustrate how the author creates voice through the Big 6. Record on your notebook paper.

Quotes from pages 20-21

"Ham was the youngest one, like me, and he was bad. Sometimes I am bad, too" (20).

"busted his britches" (20).

"tattletale brothers" (20).

"Jimmy Crow says that" (20).

"Their day for the Zoo is Thursday. That's in the Bible" (20).

"So this is who all will be in our village: the Price family, Lone Ranger, Cinderella, Briar Rose, and the Tribes of Ham" (21).

Quotes from pages 50-54

"He has a big old round belly with his belly button sticking out like a black marble" (50).
"One of those little children stole, which is a bad sin" (50).
"Tata Undo" (51).
"But she won't cook [Tater Tots]. I wish she would" (51).
"The roofs burn up because they are all made out of sticks and hay like the Three Little Pigs" (51).
"After that Mama put pins back in her mouth, so no more talking." (54).
"But Jesus loves me and this I know: nobody can sit in that green swivel rocker but Father" (54).

Discuss what each quote is in relation to the big 6

Ending of Day 1

- Continue working through Ruth May's first and second sections to find other examples of Ruth May's voice.
- Tie each example to one of the Big 6.
- **Based on these quotes, what is Ruth May's character?**
- **How do these quotes create that character's voice?**

Day 2 / Group Work

Get into groups no larger than 4. Each group will be assigned a character: Adah, Leah, Rachel, or Orleanna.

<u>As a group, complete on a sheet of notebook paper to turn in EOP today:</u>

A. Define your character's personality. Who is she? (Generate a list) What is important to her? (Generate a list) How do you know this?

B. Work through the first two sections of the novel to determine evidence that best illustrates the characters' voices. Remember to tie each quote to the Big 6.

C. Respond to each question:

1. Why would Kingsolver create this character?
2. What is she trying to communicate through this character?
3. Why give your character a voice at all?
4. What role does this voice play in the novel?
5. What can she do that others can't?

When finished, begin individual essay, next slide…

Individual Response *1 page minimum*

Reflect on the following question:

Why is this character's voice important to the novel, and how does Kingsolver use this character's voice to communicate her message?